



### An Easter Confession.

My pretty sweetheart, if that egg encased in shell so bright,  
All full of white and golden sweets, were packed ten times as tight,  
Until its shell were bursting and the treasures trickling through,  
E'en then 'twould not show how my heart is filled with love of you!

PAUL WEST.

Easter Morn in the Sistine Chapel.  
Remarkable House of Worship in which  
Pope Leo Will Celebrate High Pontifical  
Mass with Great Splendor and Pomp.

CHRIST has risen! It is Easter Sunday, the city by the Tiber, in the eternal city, the city that once ruled the world—Rome—and all Christians rejoice. There Easter has an

especial significance, for there the Vicar-General of Christ lives—His Holiness Pope Leo XIII. Bowed with age and the weight of years, he dwells in the great Vatican, the Mecca of all Catholic Christians. He

is a splendid old man, whom humanity irrespective of creed respects for his goodness and nobility of character, and for that reason this story of Easter Mass in the world famous Sistine Chapel should prove of timely interest.

Time was when the Vatican ruled Rome territorially—before the day of Garibaldi and Victor Emanuel. Things have changed since then, and now the Pope's earthly possessions are limited by the Vatican grounds. He never leaves his demesne, for he has never been reconciled to the loss of temporal power. There he dwells as becomes the head of his church—a splendid type of humanity—a worthy successor to Peter.

Easter Sunday is the only day of the year, except on the occasion of a jubilee, that the Pope celebrates pontifical high mass. And he usually does this in the Sistine Chapel, the most wonderful house of worship in the world. It is far more grand in conception and superb in execution than St. Peter's or any of the other great cathedrals, and is one of the "sights" to which all tourists flock.

There is no building in the world whose interior can compare with that of the chapel in question, and it would be practically impossible to duplicate it, for Michael Angelo, Perugino and Botticelli are dead, and there are no such fresco painters in these degenerate days. The frescoes in the chapel are worthy of the fame of their artists and of the place they occupy in Papal history.

The wonderful Sistine Chapel is really a part of the Vatican. It was built in 1473 by order of Sixtus IV., after whom it was named. Baccio Pontelli was the designer, and was assisted by the greatest artists of his time. Sixtus IV. was famous for two shortcomings—he was a spendthrift and a disciple of nepotism. Immediately on becoming Pope he sent for all his relatives (most of whom were in monasteries) and placed them in great positions. He appointed them Cardinals, archbishops and to worldly positions, and made them rich out of the Papal treasury. At the same time he squandered money right and left. Some of the money went toward the building and decorating of the Sistine Chapel, which remains a monument—not to him, but to the artists who gave the best years of their lives to the work.

The chapel is 147 feet long and 51 feet wide. On the right is a singing gallery extending the length of the wall. The floor is of Comatesque mosaic, red, blue and white being the predominating colors. Opposite to the entrance is the altar, a superb creation of solid gold and mother-of-pearl.

The lower parts of the walls are painted in imitation of drapery, while above are the remarkable frescoes. Two of these are over the main entrance and six on each side of the chapel.

The first of the series is on the left of the altar, and represents scenes from the life of Moses. Beginning at the altar, the first

fresco shows the journey of Moses and Zipporah into Egypt. It is the work of Pinturicchio, and is mediocre compared to the others. The next one is by Sandro Botticelli, considered by many to be the equal to Angelo. It shows Moses slaying the Egyptian, driving away the Midianite shepherd and kneeling before the burning bush.

Next is the destruction of Pharaoh in the Red Sea. Then comes the adoration of the golden calf, a powerful bit of painting, by Cosimo Roselli, who is also responsible for the Pharaoh fresco.

Number five shows the punishment of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, by Botticelli. Adjoining it is one picturing the publication of the law and the death of Moses. Luca Signorelli is the artist.

The first of the second series, which begins to the right of the altar and which shows scenes in the life of Christ, is the "Baptism of the Saviour," Pinturicchio being the painter.

"The Temptation of Christ" adjoins this, and is in Botticelli's best style. "The Calling of Peter and Andrew," by Dominico Ghirlandajo, adjoins this. Then comes Roselli's "Sermon on the Mount," then Perugino's "Peter Receiving the Keys," and last but not least, Roselli's "Last Supper."

Perhaps the most remarkable piece of color work in the chapel is "The Last Judgment," by Michael Angelo, which covers the wall behind the altar.

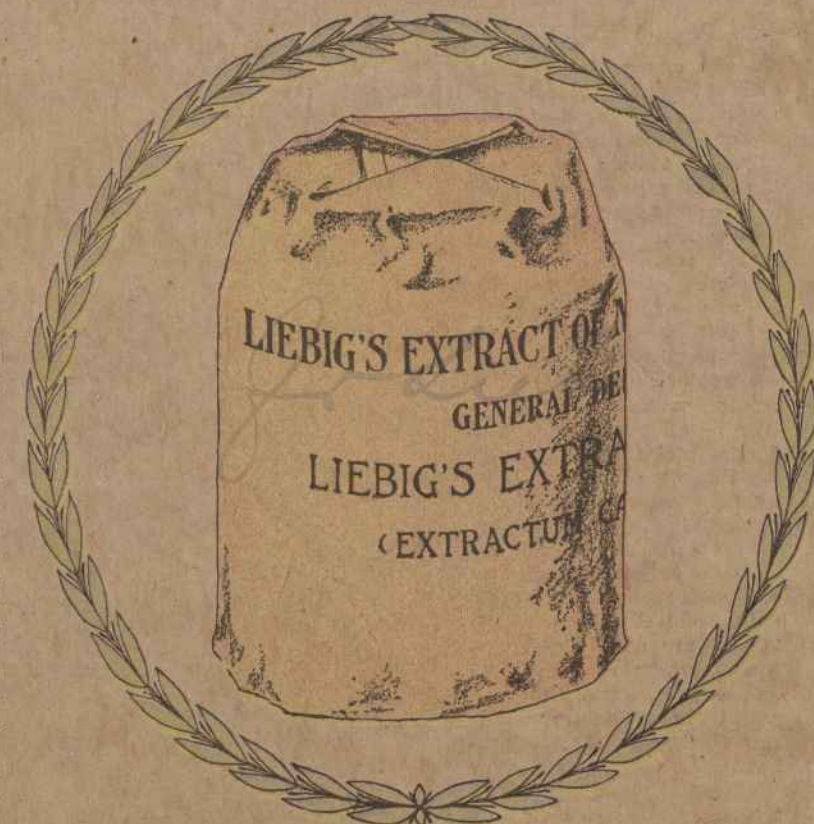
It is the ceiling, however, that is the piece de resistance. The painting of it was begun in 1508 by Angelo at the urgent solicitation of Pope Julius II. and finished in 1512. It is divided into nine parts as follows: 1—"The Separation of Light and Darkness;" 2—"The Creation of the Sun and Moon;" 3—"The Creation of the Trees and Plants;" 4—"The Creation of Adam;" 5—"The Creation of Eve;" 6—"The Fall and Expulsion from Paradise;" 7—"The Sacrifice of Noah;" 8—"The Deluge;" 9—"The Intoxication of Noah."

Such is the famous Sistine Chapel in which the Pope will celebrate mass. Easter mass is the most solemn of the ceremonies of the Roman Church. It is a ceremonial of great splendor, and the vestments worn by the Pope and the Cardinals are almost beyond value.

Leo XIII. wears all white, edged with real gold. The deacons and sub-deacons wear white surplices and violet soutanes.

The Pope and the members of the Sacred college enter the Sistine Chapel through the Pauline Chapel. The successor of Peter is preceded by the Cross, and walks under a canopy of white and gold. The procession goes direct to the altar, while "Gloria in Excelsis" is chanted. Then comes a moment of silence, "Agnus Dei" is sung, followed by the celebrated "Motet" of Palestrina, "Frates." Then mass is sung, the holy sacrament is given, the Pope pronounces the benediction, and the ceremonies are finished.

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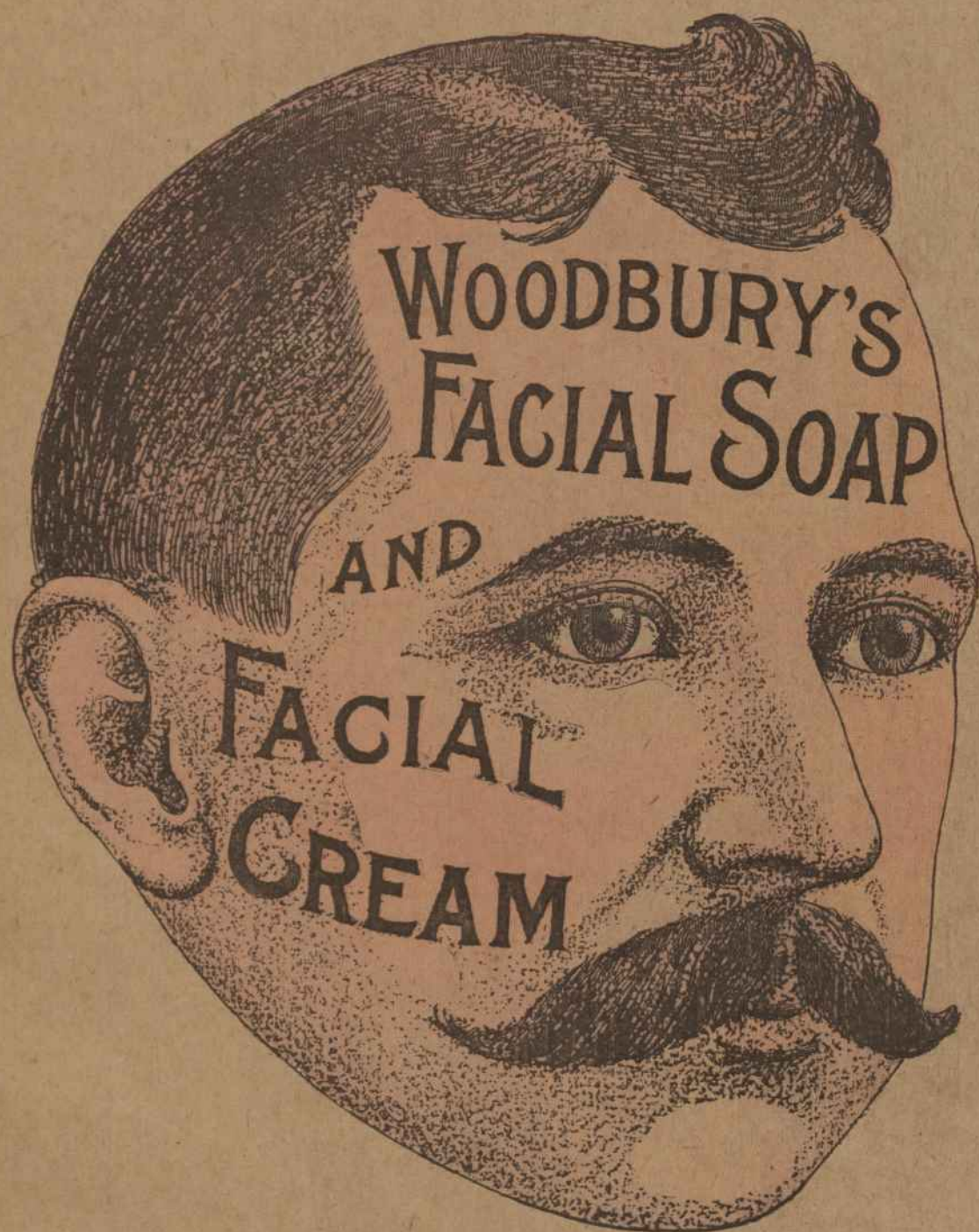


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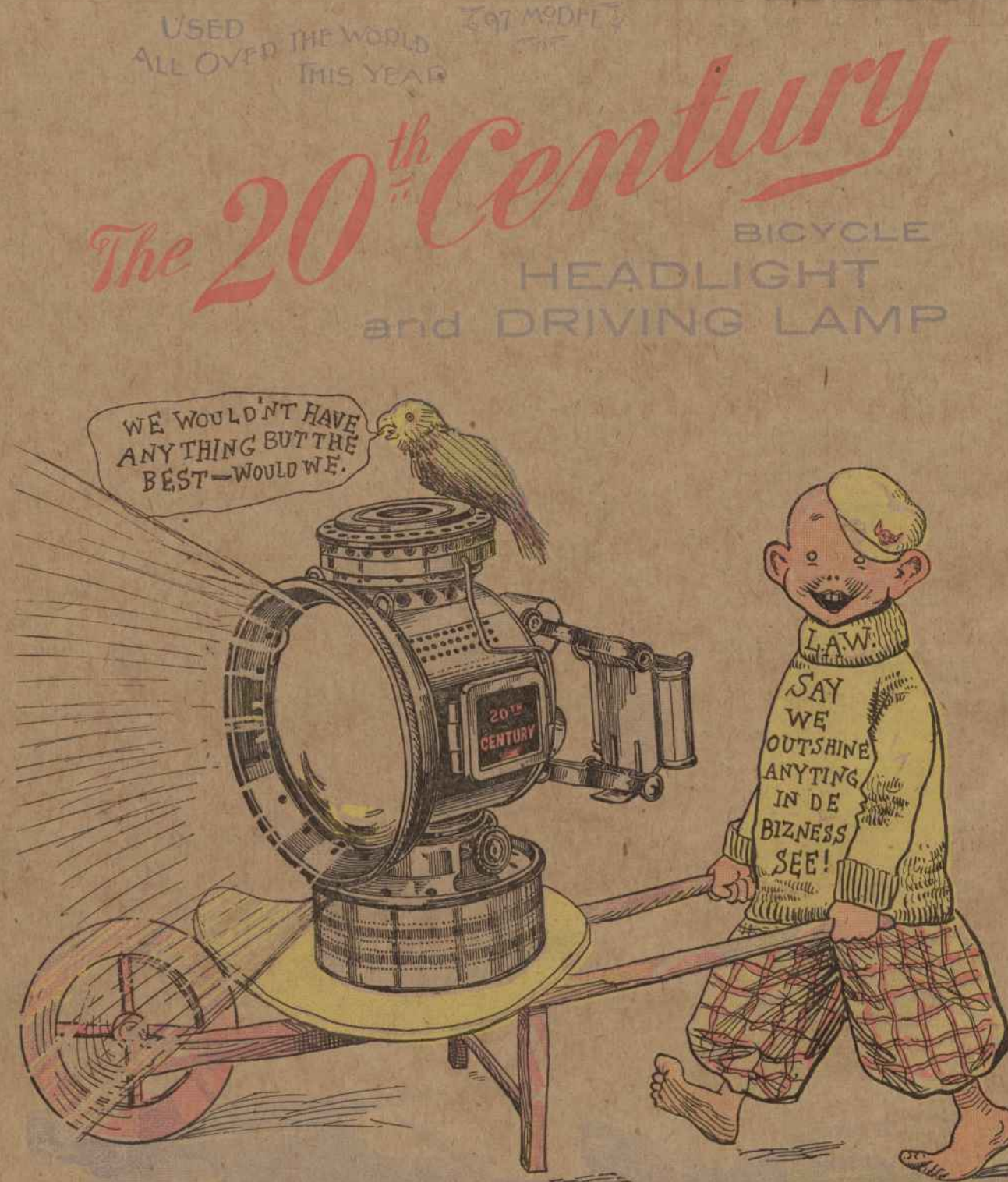


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